

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A packaging casing, for a in-particular sausage casing, which comprises knitted fabric or contains the latter as a strengthening constituent and has at least one seam with a release thread, characterized in that the release thread loses its strength under the influence of a treatment compatible with the packaging contents or as a result of a time lapse.
2. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the packaging casing comprises it is a shape-determining casing net surrounding the actual sausage casing.
3. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the release thread is temperature-sensitive.
4. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 3, characterized in that the release thread is thermoplastic.
5. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the loss in strength of the release thread is based on embrittlement.

6. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the loss in strength of the release thread is based on the fact that the latter or an essential constituent is soluble in a treatment medium.

7. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that a plurality of the longitudinal seams with release thread are distributed over the circumference.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for opening a packaging casing, ~~in particular for~~ a sausage casing, which comprises a knitted fabric or contains the latter as a strengthening constituent and has at least one seam with a release thread, characterized ~~in that, before opening,~~ by waiting for the loss in strength of the release thread ~~is awaited,~~ which takes place under the influence of a treatment compatible with the packaging contents or a result of a time lapse, and thereafter opening the packaging casing.

9. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 8, characterized in the release thread loses its strength at a release temperature which lies above the temperature of any treatment of the packaged packaging content and below a temperature at which the packaging contents may be damaged during the period of time required for releasing the release thread, and in that the release thread is heated to the release temperature in order to open the casing.

10. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 9, characterized in that the packaging contents, together with the packaging casing, are subjected to a treatment, as a result of which ~~their dimensional stability grows and the strength of the release~~ thread is reduced in strength.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 2, characterized in that the release thread is temperature-sensitive.

14. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 2, characterized in that the loss in strength of the release thread is based on embrittlement.

15. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 3, characterized in that the loss in strength of the release thread is based on embrittlement.

16. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 2, characterized in that the loss in strength of the release thread is based on the fact that the latter or an essential constituent is soluble in a treatment medium.

17. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 2, characterized in that a plurality of the longitudinal seams with release thread are distributed over the circumference.

18. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 3, characterized in that a plurality of the longitudinal seams with release thread are distributed over the circumference.

19. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that a plurality of the longitudinal seams with release thread are distributed over the circumference.

20. (Currently Amended) The packaging casing as claimed in claim 5, characterized in that a plurality of the longitudinal seams with release thread are distributed over the circumference.